





#### MARK STILES' SECRET.

Continued from Page J.

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dore," he said in low, hoarse tones. "The thought of you here—the thought of Ferdiusnd at Southam and myself at the end of the world—I said to myself: "I harm no one by going as the gardener to Wilton House. How could I ever tell this awful, shameful treachery would ever come to light? And Fedore, my dearest and best, how has it fared with you? Ah, the hours I have spent walking up and down outside this house, content if only I could see the light in your room and the shadow on your blind!"

He folded her again and the shadow on your

light in your room and the shadow on your blind!"

He folded her again and again in his arms, and their lips met in their first long, lingering kiss.

"Julian! Ah, how little I thought this would ever be!" she whispered in sweet, shy joy. "When you brought me those hateful flowers of yesterday, you little know the persecution I endured because of them. Mother wished me to be engaged to your cousin. Ah!" And a shudder went through her frame. "She little knows how I loathe him—how I have always done so. Though I could never bring it home to him, I always guessed that he had deceived me in this matter. But although I have suffered bitterly, what about you? No punishment can be too severe for him—no retribution too bitter."

"Hush, my darling!"

And he laid a gentle hand upon her soft lips.

"Ah, let us not begin our hannings to

And he laid a gentle hand upon her soft lips.

"Ah, let us not begin our happiness in that way! Yes, he has robbed me, he has tricked me, cruelly used and served me. But, dearest, he has left me you—you and your faithful heart. He could not touch that. And if you are mine, my Fedore, why, let him bave the rest. His retribution will be sure. But I will not hasten it. Ah, my love, my love! To know you deem me innocent. To know that before the whole world now I can lift up my head as an honest, innocent man. Why, there is no joy that can compare with it, except it is the joy of sharing it all with you."

Mrs. Molyneux had returned from her drive, and asking no questions, gathered her rich furs about her and sailed across the hall.

her rich furs about her and sailed across the hail.

She noticed Mr. Ferdinand Horley's coat and hat, she heard voices in the drawing-room, and she hastened to assure herself that her fondert wishes had been realized.

A few words she caught of the impassioned speech in which Fedore was implored to share all her lover could offer. "My dearest child," she exclaimed, throwing open the door, "you know that you have my consent and fondest blessing."

The light was so dim, and the two so close together, she was not aware of the error she had made.

"Ferdinand, my dear boy, I have always looked upon you as a son."

"But it is not Ferdinand, mother," said a quiet, sweet voice. "It is Julian, and I am going to be his wife!"

Mrs. Molyneux did not faint or lose her presence of mind. She came forward and took Fedore by the arm.

"Are you mad?" she asked, in a low, stern voice. "You would marry Julian Horley, the man who all but murdered his cousin?"

"Stay! Let me speak!"

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"Are you mad?" she asked, in a low, stern voice. "You would marry Julian Horley, the man who all but murdered his cousin?"

"Stay! Let me speak!"

Never had Mrs. Molyneux heard so stern a tone from the lips of the courteous Julian Horley.

"I said just now that I should seek no vengeance for the act of my cousin, which sent me, a homeless vagabond, to seek my bread as best I could; and I keep to my word. But justice I will have! And that justice demands that he shall stand face to face with me, and in your presence and that of Fedore also, shall confess the trick-erry shamelessly practiced. Give me but a few moments—half an hour at the most. I will go straight to Southam and insist upon his appearance here."

He was so stern and eager, Mrs. Molyneux was silent; but Fedore, as if to show her consent, placed her haud in his, and looked him in the face.

"Go, Julian, don't lose a moment! Justice is all I ask, too! We will leave vengeance alone, it would not add to our happinest."

So the young man started off, full of hope, though with sadness in his heart upon his cousin's account. He sped light of foot over the half frozen ground. The wind was piercingly cold, the ground under foot was slushy and damp. He chose the short cut, skirting the high road by the side of the Wilton House plantation.

There was a gurgling brook to cross, by a rustic bridge, and the water, swellen by the late heavy fails of snow, was rushing and roaring, where in the summer-time is whispered and rippled. Julian Horley was in frantic hinste, and he took the bridge almost at a stride; then was about to jump the damp morass leading to the other side, when something dark loomed in his path—something stretched out prone and motion-less. Stooping over it with a thrill of horror, his heart beating like a sledge-hammer, he saw the white face of Ferdinand Horley. Ghastly he laid there, the scar upon his temple had re-opened, and blood was pouring freely from it. There was no "acting" now; this was grim business. Paralyzed with borror, Julian raise

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